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August 12, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of
Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), the region's most prominent private sector business advocacy organization, I urge your strong support for the City of Baltimore's TIGER II grant application for the Westport Waterfront Transit-Oriented Development (Westport Waterfront TOD). The Westport Waterfront TOD will provide multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including light rail, highway, pedestrian, bike and road, to support the development of 13,000 new jobs and 2,000 housing units and the rehabilitation of a 50-acre brownfield in a severely distressed area of Baltimore.

The GBC is a regional membership organization of more than 500 businesses, nonprofit organizations, and educational and civic institutions. Our mission is to improve the business climate of the region by organizing its corporate and civic leadership to develop solutions to the problems that affect the region's competitiveness and viability.

The Westport Waterfront TOD TIGER II application meets several of the GBC's priorities for the Baltimore region which are consistent with the TIGER II grant criteria. These include:

Fostering Economic Competitiveness

At the GBC, we believe that regions, not jurisdictions, are the primary economic competitors in the global economy. Successful regions are characterized by healthy and viable urban cores. The Westport Waterfront TOD represents a \$1.2 billion investment in Baltimore's urban core, an investment that will drive regional competitiveness and improve quality of life.

Developing a regional transportation system that enables the region to grow and thrive in the coming decades

The Westport Waterfront TOD improvements to MD 295 are critical to ensure the efficient operation of a key artery between Baltimore and Washington DC. New development concentrated along the Maryland Transit Administration's light rail system fulfills state and regional goals to cluster density around existing transit assets in close proximity to targeted industry clusters.

Preparing for growth from the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program

The Westport Waterfront TOD provides an important "relief valve" for the region, channeling growth related to BRAC-related expansion of suburban defense installation to a smart growth location already served by infrastructure and multi-modal transportation systems.

Strengthening minority and women-owned businesses in the region

The Westport Waterfront TOD's strong commitment to the utilization of minority and women-owned businesses (WBE and MBE) will expand opportunity within the

construction industry in the Baltimore region.

The Westport Waterfront TOD proposal not only meets the requirements of the TIGER II grant but embodies the spirit of the Obama Administration's Sustainable Communities initiative by addressing the need for jobs in our region while building the transportation infrastructure essential to support sustainable economic growth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donald C. Fry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Donald" being more prominent and the last name "Fry" ending in a long, sweeping tail.

Donald C. Fry
President and CEO

cc: Mr. Jamie Kendrick, Baltimore City
Department of Transportation